

CEUTA AND MELLILA THE FIRST

Spanish Posts IN Maracca

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Because of Ceuta's commercial importance in ivory, gold, and slaves, it's ownership was continually disputed until Portugal gained control in 1415. Portugal ceded Ceuta to Spain in the Treaty of Lisbon in 1688. In the conquest of Melilla in 1497, the city was vir-tually taken without a fight. However it was immediately threatened with reconquest and subject to sieges 1694-1696 and again 1774-1775. Historically a contentious issue be-tween Spain and Morocco regarding ownership, the 1860

Treaty of Tangiers vastly ex-tended Spain's territory in Morocco. Numerous other treaties in 1859, 1860, 1861, and 1894 further ratified the territorial boundary surrounding the fortress of Melilla.

This article will deal with 18th and early 19th century mail markings indicating places of origin from these two cities and classified numerically for identification in the works "Prefilatelia Española" by authors Tizon & Guinovart.

Dezeuta or (De Ceuta) is the first place of origin marking Type 1 and differs from the Port of entry marks applied to transiting covers. This 1747 Ceuta to l'Auvergne France cover was routed by Madrid via Zaragoza and Jaca leading to the Oleron Pass for entry into France. The prepaid border to border rate was 16 reales up to 5 adarmes with the recipient paying the French delivery charge.

Below is the cover described above. Dates of use are unknown for this marking; how-ever another predates this cover from the Alfaro collection and is dated 1743 to Genova via Barcelona.

DZEUTA



Type 1 Straight line DZEUTA

AFRICA



Type 2 boxed AFRICA

In 1779 a postal decree provided for 31 Spanish Postal Districts of which North Africa (Ceuta and Melilla) became #27. These Moroccan cities thus enjoyed domestic rates to Spain. Rates were marked in Quartos and a mark indicating the place of origin in Africa or the port of entry into Spain was applied.



Type 4

The type 4 was in use from 1781-1801 and is known used in black and red. The red (not shown), is known used extant in 1801. Looking at the two boxed Africa's shown above, the easiest seen difference lies in the shape of the A's. The cover is posted Ceuta to Madrid and rated 8 Quartos the rate District 27 to District 1.



Type 3 Straight Line Africa

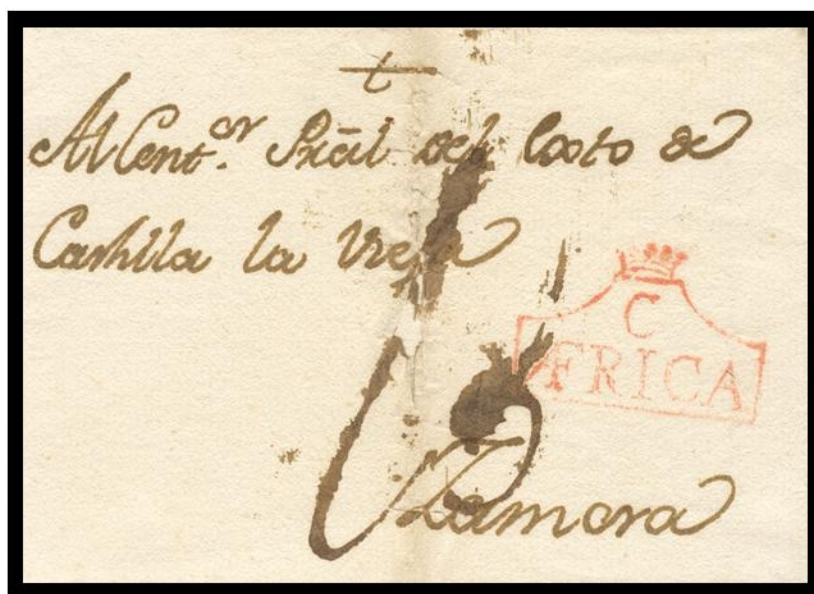
The above cover was posted in 1774 from Ceuta to Castelnaudary in Languedoc France. The writer outlines the postal routing on the front sending via Madrid and Zaragoza through Oleron and Toulouse to its final destination Castelnaudary. Oleron became Oloron [Ste.-Marie] in the first quarter of the 19th Cent. It's the first town of any size on route across the Pyrenees to/from Spain and one of only a few passes, along with Bayonne and Irun, to provide crossings between the countries. The type 3 marking (in red) was used 1774-1778.

Beginning in 1791 and continuing to 1853 a series of crowned boxed C/AFRICA markings were implemented to identify Ceuta as the city of origin in the postal administration. These are identified as types 5-9 by Tizon & Guinovart. All were struck in red except type 9 which is known in both red and black with the black color known extant.



Type 5 crowned boxed C/AFRICA

This type 5 shown below is dated 1791 and was in use 1791-1801. Posted to Zamora in District 14 Castilla la Vieja, it was routed Ceuta to Tangier, to Gibraltar and San Roque. It proceeded overland to Medina del Campo and locally on to Zamora. The rate is 16½ quartos for the second weight step as shown in manuscript on the front.

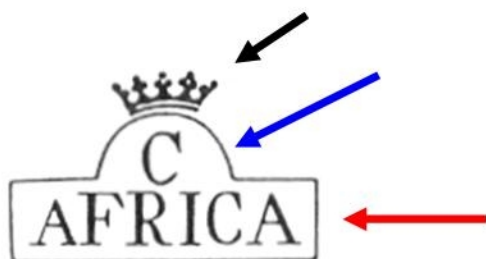


Type 5

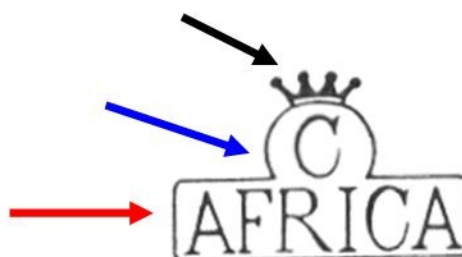
Type 6 (not shown) was used 1801-1804 and type 7 (shown below) 1802-1805. Addressed to Barcelona, District 27 to District 5 (Cataluña). Franked 15 quartos, it was overpaid by 1 as the rate for second weight step for this route was 14 quartos for 6-8 adarmes. The adarme was an ancient measurement of weight the equivalent of 1.79 grams or 1/16 oz.



Type 7



Type 7



Type 8

When observing the differences in types 4-9, the types are quite easy to discern. The first arrow colored in black distinguishes the changes in the crown at the top of the box. The second colored in blue depicts the changes in the shape of the box outlining the C/Africa. And last, the red arrow depicts the type style of the letter "C" and the word Africa with emphasis on the change in the letter "A"



Type 8

The above Type 8 cover Ceuta to Madrid is rated 9 quartos the first step rate from District 27 to District 1. The rate mark for Madrid also displays a date cancel (Mio 4) May 4. The type 8 cancel was in use 1814-1829.

New postal rates became effective 4th September 1815. This 1841 cover cancelled Type 9 Ceuta to Granada was charged 8 Quartos overcharged by 1. The postal route was Ceuta to Cadiz post route 7 to Cordoba and route 8 Cordoba to Grenada.



Type 9



Baeza Type 10

This type of postmark was first introduced in Spain in 1842 and are known as Baeza cancellations after Don Juan Baeza, the Spanish Minister of Posts. The number 27 on the sides of the cancel indicate the number assigned to the province, and in this case, No. 27 was assigned to the Spanish possessions in Africa. Official and Judicial mail was generally sent free of postage. The 'A' for Abono indicates payment or subscription. The black straight line Ceuta Tribunal de Guerre indicates Judicial mail. This is the only presently known cover with the marking "Ceuta/Tribunal de Guerre.



October 1849 a postal decree called for issuance of stamps for Spain and rates set at 6 quartos for single domestic letters up to 6 adarmes. Stamps were to be issued Jan. 1st of each year and this held true until 1854. Since postage was now applied a parilla obliterator was required to cancel the stamp and the "Baeza" Ceuta/Africa/27 (District 27) applied as marking of origin. The baeza was used in Ceuta from 1842-1854 and Melilla 1849-53.

Melilla is the other city located in the Spanish Enclave for which this article is written. The first Melilla cancel was in use 1793-1798. As previously stated, even though part of the Spanish postal system, Melilla located in the Spanish enclave in North Africa, was considered Morocco by it's location and was not ceded to Spain until the "Treaty of Tangiers" in 1860. The Sultan ceded all the land "from the sea to the Valley of Anghera". The cover below written Feb. 13, 1793 was rated 13 quartos for the rate Melilla to Calaf. This Type 1 cancel in red is one of two preadhesive cancels from Melilla.

AFRICA

Type 1 Melilla cancel



MELILLA AFRICA

Type 2

This last cover depicts the Melilla cancel Type 2 and is a front only rated 11 Quartos second weight step Melilla to Malaga. The cancel was in use 1827-1828 only and is the only known usage of the cancel in red. Another variety is also known extant in black. As previously stated, the baeza marking for Melilla (Type 3) was of the standardized style of all provinces and was assigned No. 27 as Ceuta, again indicating Spanish possessions in Africa. From this point on, cancels became circle date stamps indicating date of mailing and point of origin.